



Sound Dermatology

WARTS

What Are Warts?

Warts are common skin growths caused by a virus called human papillomavirus (HPV). They are typically harmless but can spread and may become bothersome.

What Causes Warts?

- Infection with human papillomavirus (HPV)
 - Direct skin-to-skin contact
 - Contact with contaminated surfaces (e.g., locker rooms, shared equipment)
 - Small breaks in the skin that allow the virus to enter
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Common Symptoms

- Rough, raised bumps on the skin
 - May have tiny black dots (clotted blood vessels)
 - Can be skin-colored, white, or gray
 - Often occur on the hands, fingers, feet (plantar warts), or around nails
 - May be painful when located on pressure areas (e.g., bottom of the foot)
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Treatment Options

In-Office Treatments

- **Cryotherapy (freezing):** destroys wart tissue
- **Cantharidin:** causes blistering to lift the wart off the skin
- **Other treatments:** may be used depending on the type and location

At-Home Treatments

- **Salicylic acid:** gradually removes layers of the wart
 - Regular, consistent application is important for success
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How to Manage at Home

- Avoid picking or scratching warts (can spread the virus)
 - Do not share personal items (towels, razors, nail clippers)
 - Keep the area clean and covered if needed
 - Wash hands after touching warts
 - Use treatments consistently as directed
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When to Follow Up

- If the wart is not improving with treatment
 - If the wart is painful, bleeding, or spreading
 - If you are unsure whether the growth is a wart
 - If warts are persistent or recurring
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Key Points to Remember

- Warts are caused by a virus and can spread
- Treatment takes time—consistency is key
- Avoid picking to prevent spreading
- Many warts require **multiple treatments over several months**

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